

ACTION

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1950



BIG NEWS !
8 EXTRA PAGES !
Two exciting
stories.

SCOOP!

MEN OF ACTION...

who displayed cool courage in the face of death

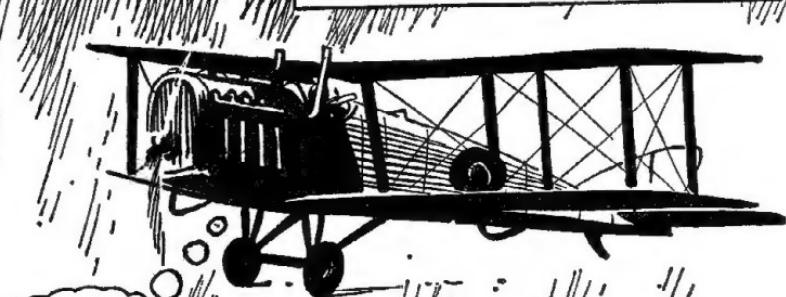
Sergeant Len Birnie was a member of an R.A.F. Shackleton crew taking part in night training exercises in Scotland. On January 10th, 1958, Birnie's aircraft was flying over the Morayshire hills when a violent storm broke over them. The storm heightened to a gale which threw the Shackleton out of control into a steep hillside. By a miracle none of the crew died in the crash and badly shaken they clambered out of the shattered and burning fuselage. But not everyone had escaped. Too weak to move, an injured



man had collapsed against the burning wreckage. It was Sergeant Birnie who discovered that one of them was missing. He immediately went back to the wreckage and saw the man slumped between two burning engines. Ignoring the roaring flames, and the fact that the fuel tanks would erupt at any second, Birnie half-carried and half-dragged the man to safety. It was the act of a very brave man and Sergeant Birnie was awarded the George Medal for his heroism.

Scoop!

"A WING AND A PRAYER"... A PHRASE COINED DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR TO DESCRIBE THE FLIGHT OF A BADLY DAMAGED PLANE. HOW MUCH MORE SO DID IT DESCRIBE ALL FLYING IN THE PIONEER DAYS BETWEEN THE WARS.



HA, THE
LINE TO TROYES!
I CAN'T GO WRONG
IF I FOLLOW
THAT...



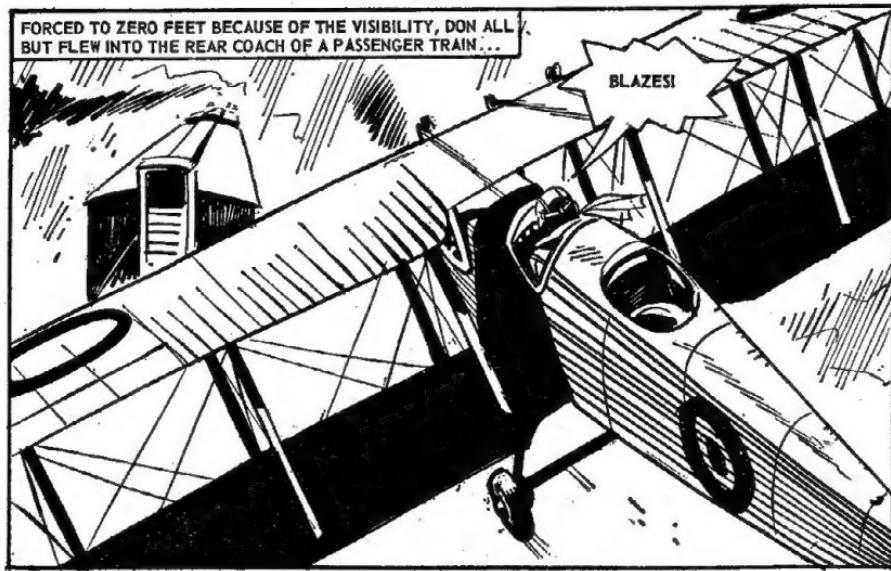
GALE FORCE WINDS AND DRIVING RAIN BATTERED THE DH4
AND SOAKED ITS PILOT, DON MANNION, TO THE SKIN ...

HOLY MOSES!
WHAT WEATHER!
IF I LOSE SIGHT
OF THAT TRACK,
I'M DONE FOR...

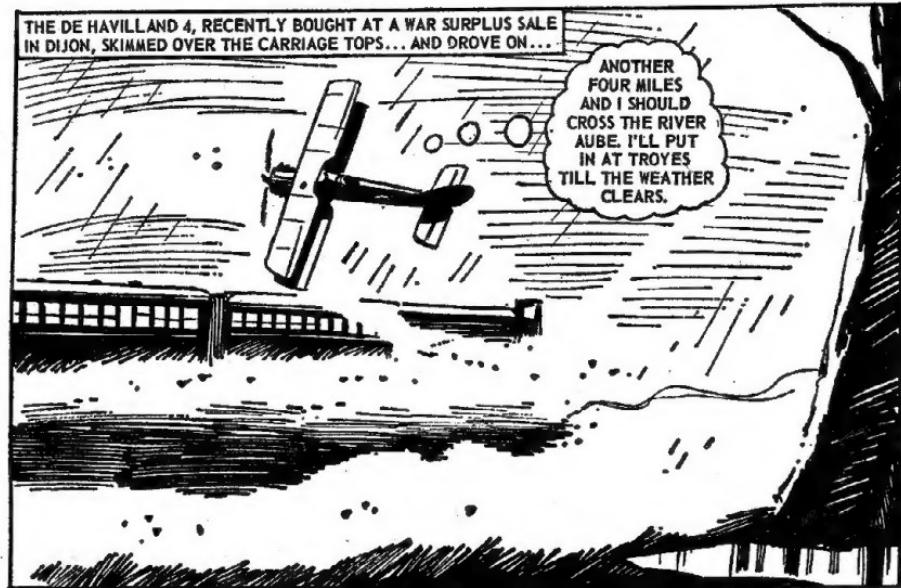


FORCED TO ZERO FEET BECAUSE OF THE VISIBILITY, DON ALLY
BUT FLEW INTO THE REAR COACH OF A PASSENGER TRAIN ...

BLAZES!



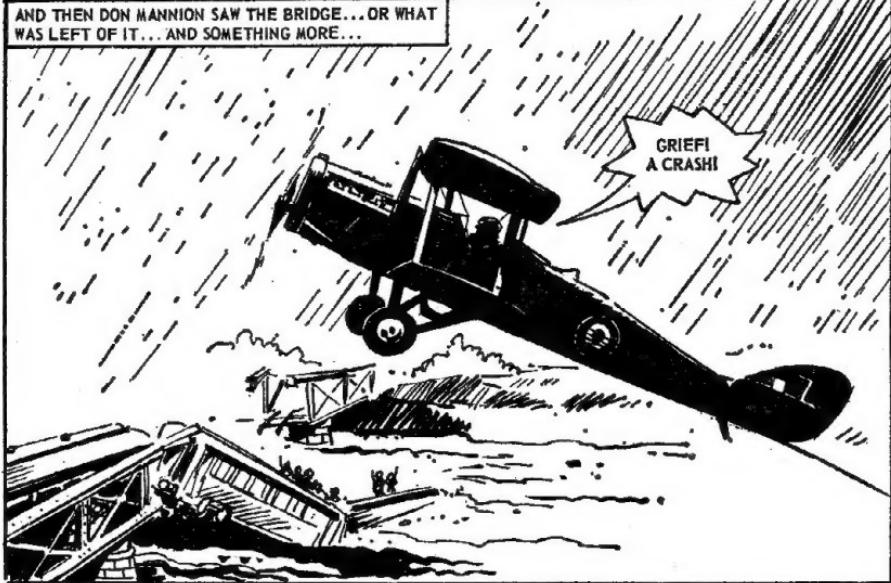
THE DE HAVILLAND 4, RECENTLY BOUGHT AT A WAR SURPLUS SALE
IN DIJON, SKIMMED OVER THE CARRIAGE TOPS... AND DROVE ON...



ANOTHER
FOUR MILES
AND I SHOULD
CROSS THE RIVER
AUBE. I'LL PUT
IN AT TROYES
TILL THE WEATHER
CLEARS.

THREE MINUTES' FLYING TIME AND THE RIVER, SWOLLEN
TO A RAGING TORRENT BY THE RAIN, WAS IN SIGHT...

AND THEN DON MANNION SAW THE BRIDGE... OR WHAT
WAS LEFT OF IT... AND SOMETHING MORE...



GRIEF!
A CRASH!



THE TRAIN
MUST HAVE
GONE STRAIGHT
INTO THE
RIVER!

AND THEN HE REMEMBERED THE EXPRESS,
ROARING OVER THIS SAME LINE AT
SOMETHING LIKE 60 M.P.H.



BY HECK!
THAT TRAIN'S
GOT TO BE
STOPPED... OR THERE'LL
BE THE BIGGEST
ALMIGHTY CRASH
OF ALL
TIME!

BACK DOWN THE LINE THE DH4 SPED... APPEARING
OUT OF THE RAINSTORM LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL.



SPARKS SPLUTTERED FROM
THE WHEELS AS THE BRAKES
WERE APPLIED. THE
PLANE BANKED AWAY ...



AROUND IT CAME AGAIN... ACROSS THE TRACK, ONLY YARDS IN FRONT OF THE POWERFUL LOCOMOTIVE.

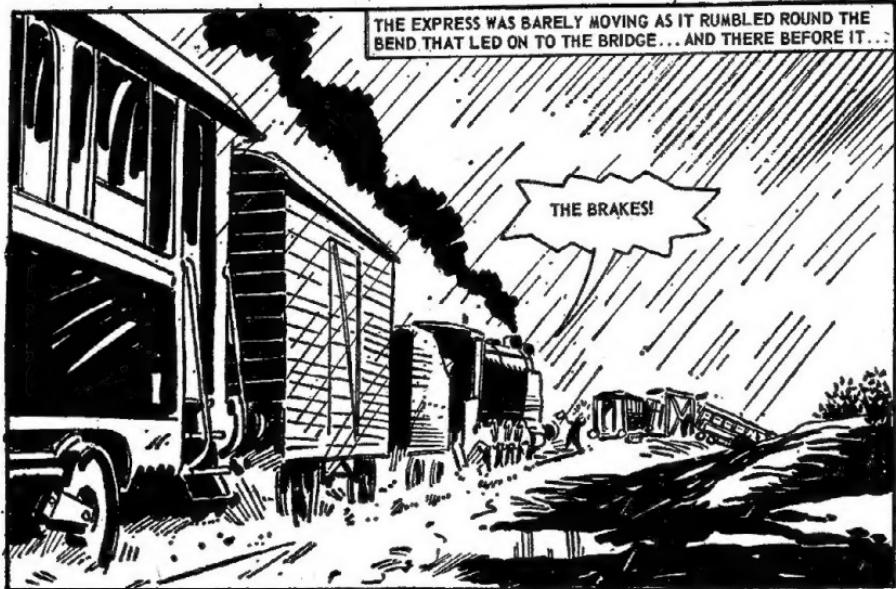
COCHON!
DOES THE FOOL
WISH TO COMMIT
SUICIDE?



BACK AND FORTH WEAVED THE DE HAVILLAND,
FORCING THE ENGINE DRIVER ALL THE TIME TO
APPLY HIS BRAKES.

THE AVIATEUR...
HE SEEMS TO WANT
YOU TO STOP THE
TRAIN, JEAN-PAUL.

MORE LIKELY
SOME BIG-HEADED
FOOL TRYING TO SHOW
OFF IN FRONT OF
OUR PASSENG—
MA FOI!



A HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE RAILWAY TRACK,
THERE WAS A STRETCH OF FLATTISH MEADOW...

I'D
BETTER
SEE IF THERE'S
ANYTHING I
CAN
DO...



DON CUT THE MOTOR
JUST AS THE ENGINE
DRIVER STOMPED
TOWARDS HIM.

M'SIEUR...
A THOUSAND THANKS!
YOU PREVENTED
A DISASTER!

IT LOOKS
LIKE THERE'S
ALREADY BEEN
ONE....



PASSENGERS BEGAN TO CROWD FROM THE EXPRESS
TOWARDS THE SCENE OF THE WRECK.



RESCUERS WERE ALREADY TRYING TO REACH THOSE TRAPPED IN THE SHATTERED COACHES...



AMONG THE PASSENGERS FROM THE EXPRESS WAS A YOUNG MAN NAMED SAMMY BARNETT, A MAN WITH A CAMERA AND A NOSE FOR NEWS.



AND THEN SAMMY NOTICED THE AIRMAN, WHO HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY THE GUARD FROM THE WRECKED TRAIN.



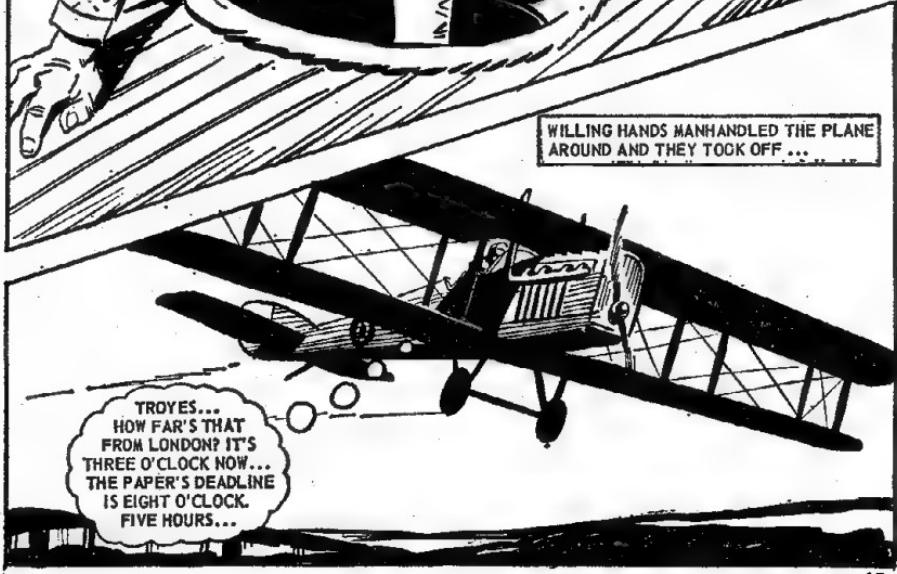
AN IDEA SPARKED IN SAMMY'S MIND AND HE SCRAMBLED AFTER DON MANNION...



THE REAR COCKPIT OF THE DH4 WAS EMPTY... AND THERE
WAS NO TIME FOR LENGTHY EXPLANATIONS, ANYWAY.



TROYES...
HOW FAR'S THAT
FROM LONDON? IT'S
THREE O'CLOCK NOW...
THE PAPER'S DEADLINE
IS EIGHT O'CLOCK.
FIVE HOURS...





DON STARED AT THE LITTLE MAN. HE HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN HIS EAGER PASSENGER IN THE CONFUSION.

FIFTY POUNDS? WHY, WHO D'YOU WANT ME TO MURDER...?

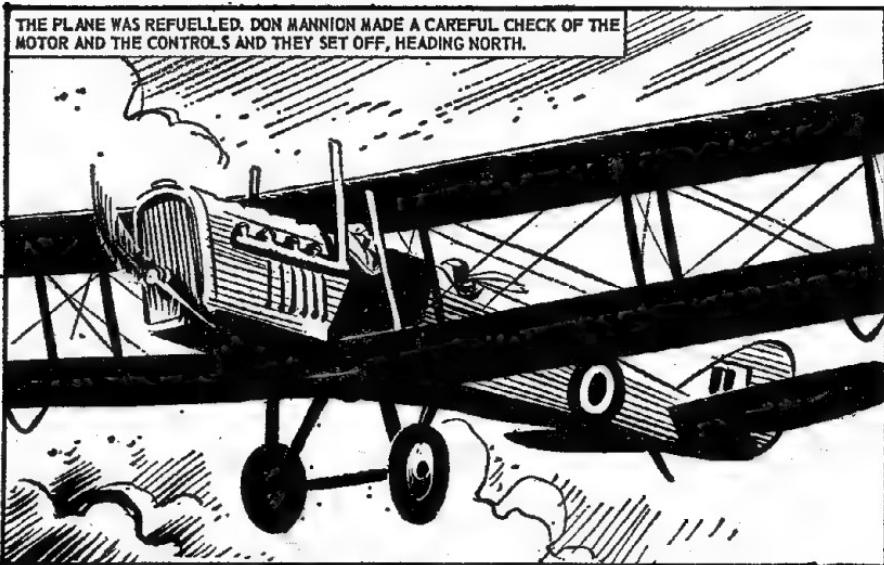
NOTHING LIKE THAT! I WORK FOR THE LONDON CLARION, YOU SEE. GET ME AND MY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CRASH BACK TO LONDON BY EIGHT O'CLOCK TONIGHT... AND MY PAPER WILL PAY YOU FIFTY QUID. HOW ABOUT IT, EH?

A THREE-HUNDRED MILE FLIGHT IN FOUR HOURS... A LANDING AT CROYDON AT NIGHT. IT WAS NOT IMPOSSIBLE!

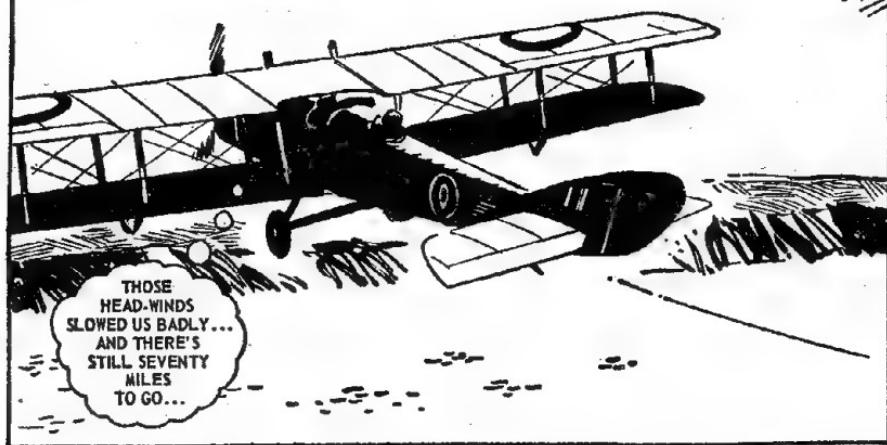
I WAS HEADING FOR BLIGHTY... EVEN IF I WASN'T AIMING TO GET THERE TODAY. FIFTY POUNDS, EH? ALL RIGHT... YOU'RE ON!



THE PLANE WAS REFUELLED. DON MANNION MADE A CAREFUL CHECK OF THE MOTOR AND THE CONTROLS AND THEY SET OFF, HEADING NORTH.



THE HOURS SPED BY... THE MILES MORE SLOWLY, IT SEEMED. THE SUN WAS SINKING BEFORE THE LITTLE PLANE REACHED THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER...



THOSE
HEAD-WINDS
SLOWED US BADLY...
AND THERE'S
STILL SEVENTY
MILES
TO GO...



THE LIGHT HAD FADED ALTOGETHER BEFORE THEY REACHED CROYDON, IN 1922, THE NEAREST AIRPORT TO LONDON.

ARE...
ARE YOU
SURE IT'S
CROYDON?
THERE AREN'T
ANY
LIGHTS.

WELL,
THERE'S NOT
MUCH FLYING
DONE AT NIGHT,
YOU SEE. IT'S
REGARDED AS
RATHER
DANGEROUS...

SAMMY GULPED AND STARED OVER THE EDGE OF THE COCKPIT INTO THE YAWNING BLACKNESS.



ON THE GRASS OF THE AERODROME, TWO MEN STOOD BESIDE A CAR... AND LOOKED UP ANXIOUSLY.



IT WAS JUST THE GUIDANCE DON MANNION NEEDED. THE DH4 GLIDED DOWN, APPEARING BRIEFLY LIKE A MOTH IN THE HEADLIGHT BEAM.



THE DE HAVILLAND HAD SCARCELY REACHED THE END OF ITS LANDING RUN WHEN THE CAR CAME BUMPING TOWARDS IT.



SAMMY BARNETT PILED OUT OF THE COCKPIT WITH HIS CAMERA AND RAN FOR THE CAR...



TIRIED AFTER THE LONG FLIGHT, THEN
THE NIGHT LANDING, DON COULD ONLY
LOOK RUEFULLY AFTER SAMMY...



DON FOUND LODGINGS AND WENT TO BED. NEXT MORNING,
HIS LANDLADY BROUGHT IN A COPY OF THE NEWSPAPER
WITH HIS CUP OF TEA...



SHE HANDED HER LODGER THE NEWSPAPER...



HE HAD RETURNED TO THE AIRFIELD AND WAS SERVICING
THE DE HAVILLAND LATER IN THE MORNING, WHEN...



HAVE
YOU SEEN
THE SPLASH WE
GOT? MY EDITOR
WAS AS PLEASED
AS PUNCH, I
CAN TELL YOU!
COME ON
DOWN...

SAMMY BARNETT TOOK HIS WALLET OUT OF HIS POCKET...



...THIRTY
...FORTY...
FIFTY! THERE
YOU ARE...
WHAT D'YOU
SAY TO
THAT?

I SAY
'THANK YOU',
MISTER
BARNETT...



FOR TWO DAYS AFTER THAT, DON WAITED AND FRETTED... AND THEN...



THERE WAS FIERCE FIGHTING IN THE STREETS OF
IRELAND'S CAPITAL CITY THAT TROUBLED YEAR.





TWO BURLY IRISHMEN CHARGED
TOWARDS SAMMY AND DON...



DON SWUNG THE HEAVY LEATHER CAMERA
CASE HE WAS HOLDING ...



A HARD PUNCH ROCKED THE OTHER IRISHMAN BACK ON HIS HEELS...



THEN OVERWHELMING WEIGHT OF NUMBERS BREACHED THE BARRICADE ... AND THE TWO ENGLISHMEN TOOK TO THEIR HEELS ...



DON DRAGGED THE RELUCTANT CAMERAMAN
TO THE AIRFIELD AND BUNDLED HIM ABOARD...

YOU WANT
THOSE PICTURES
OF YOURS TO CATCH
TOMORROW'S EDITION, DON'T
YOU? SO PACK
UP MOANING!



ONCE AGAIN, SAMMY BARNETT'S PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS
HIT THE FRONT PAGE OF THE 'CLARION'...

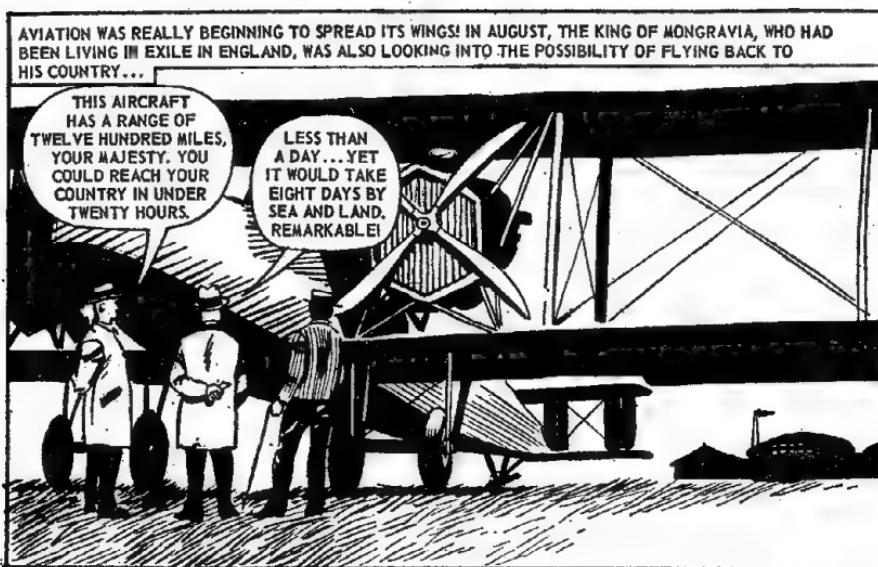
FINE WORK,
BARNETT...
FINE WORK!



HENRY ARNOLD, THE EDITOR OF THE FAMOUS LONDON
NEWSPAPER, BEAMED AT SAMMY AND DON...

WE'VE
SCOOPED
EVERY LONDON
PAPER BY A FULL
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!
A MAGNIFICENT
ACHIEVEMENT!





THE KING'S AIDE PRESSED FORWARD...

SPEED IS ESSENTIAL, YOUR MAJESTY, FOR
YOUR PEOPLE VOTE IN FOUR DAYS' TIME WHETHER
MONGRAVIA RETURNS TO THE MONARCHY OR
REMAINS A REPUBLIC.



YES, IT WAS A CUNNING MOVE OF ALGARDO'S
TO SPRING THIS REFERENDUM ON US, THINKING
IT WOULD NOT GIVE ME TIME TO RETURN AND
SHOW MYSELF TO MY PEOPLE.

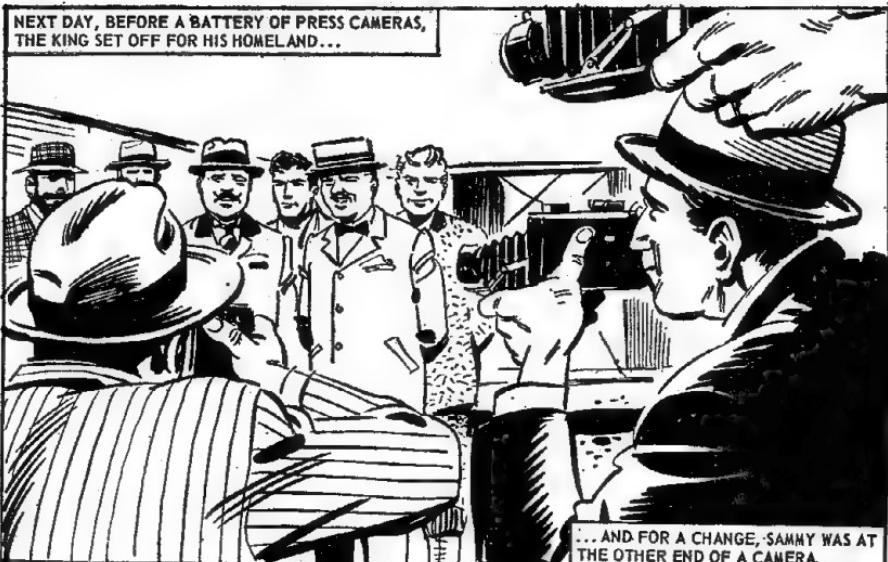
THE PRESIDENT
HAD NOT TAKEN
INTO ACCOUNT THE
POSSIBILITY OF AIR
TRAVEL, YOUR
MAJESTY...



THE HANDLEY-PAGE 0/400, USED DURING THE WAR TO CARRY A BOMB-LOAD OF THREE TONS, HAD BEEN
ADAPTED TO CARRY TWELVE PEOPLE.



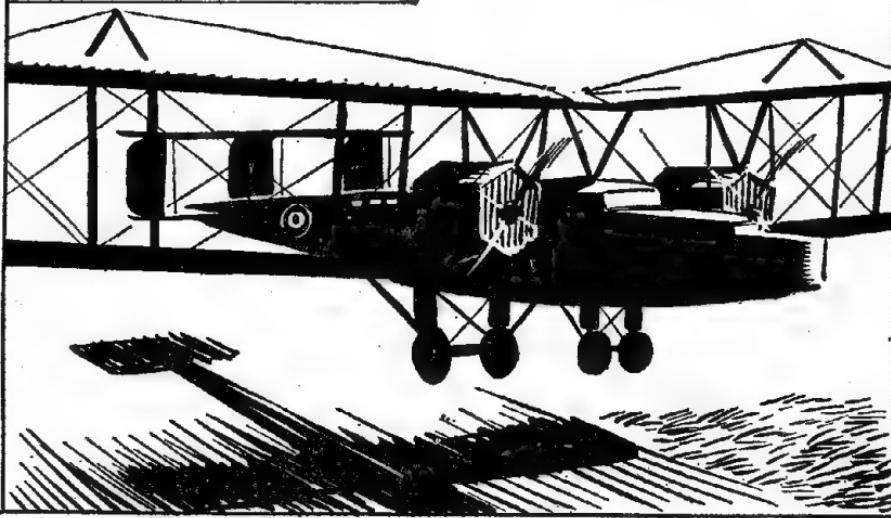
HIS MAJESTY
HAS GRACIOUSLY
CONSENTED TO TAKE
A FEW BRITISH REPORTERS
AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH
HIM. BARNETT, YOU
WILL REPRESENT
THE CLARION.



DON WOULD BE FLYING OFF AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME IN THE OLD DH4.



WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR OF HER TWO ENGINES,
THE HANDLEY-PAGE LUMBERED INTO THE AIR...

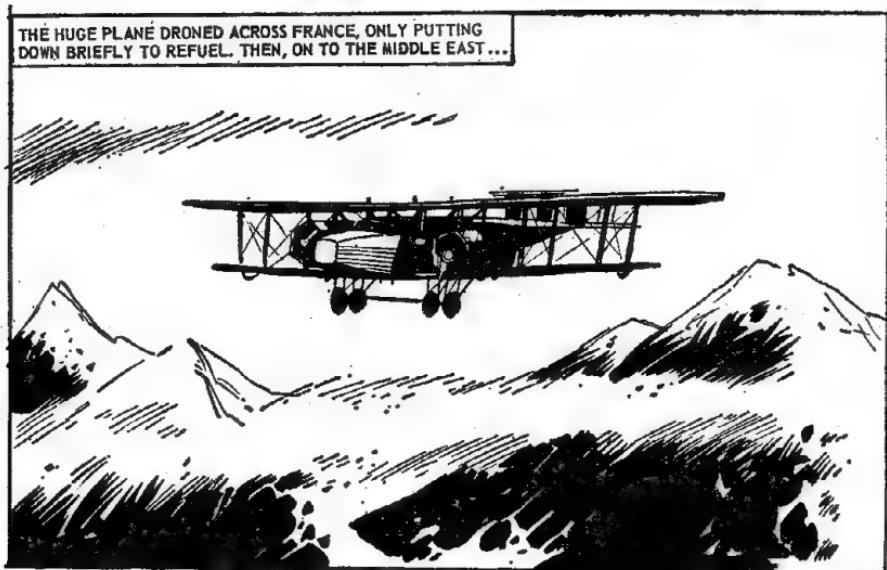


WHEN THEY WERE AIRBORNE, THE KING OF MONGRAYIA GREETED HIS GUESTS ...

PLEASE MAKE
YOURSelves COMFORTABLE,
GENTLEMEN. WE HAVE
A LONG FLIGHT
BEFORE US...



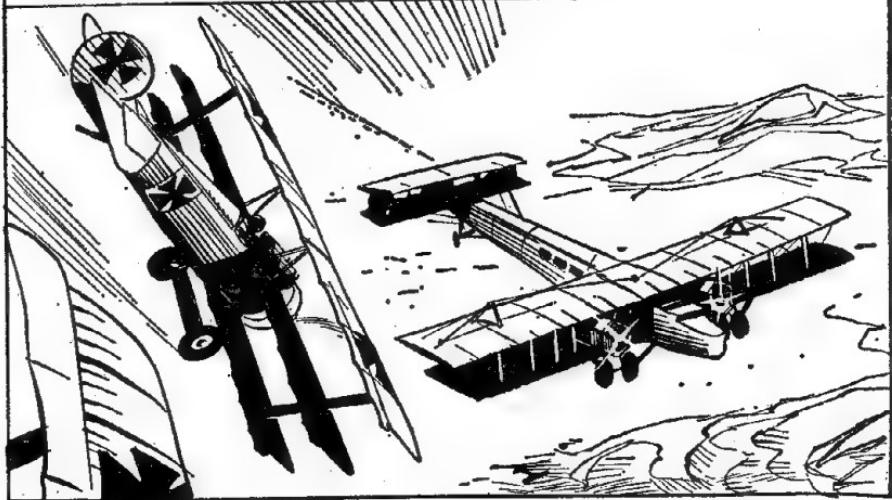
THE HUGE PLANE DRONED ACROSS FRANCE, ONLY PUTTING DOWN BRIEFLY TO REFUEL, THEN, ON TO THE MIDDLE EAST...



BEFORE LONG, A THOUSAND SQUARE MILES OF DESERT AND BARREN HILLS STRETCHED BELOW IT. THERE DID NOT SEEM TO BE ANOTHER LIVING THING IN THE WORLD... UNTIL...



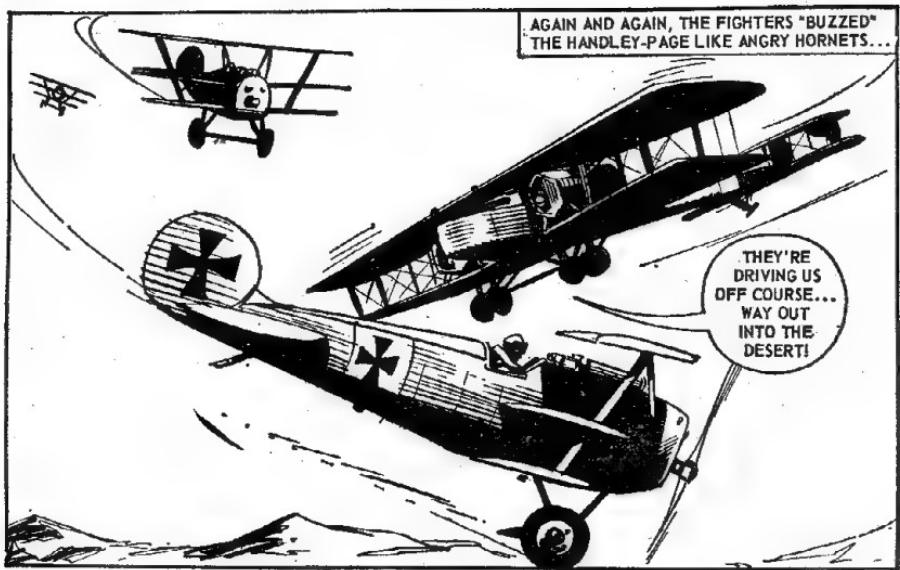
THREE FAST FIGHTER PLANES, FOKKER TRI-PLANES OF THE WARTIME GERMAN AIR FORCE, SWOOPED IN TOWARDS THE HANDLEY-PAGE...



THE PILOT OF THE ROYAL AIRCRAFT GAVE A CRY OF ALARM...



AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE FIGHTERS "BUZZED"
THE HANDLEY-PAGE LIKE ANGRY HORNETS...



VIEWED FROM INSIDE THE FUSELAGE,
THE ATTACKS WERE FRIGHTENING, BUT
SAMMY BARNETT'S HANDS WERE STEADY
ENOUGH AS HE USED HIS CAMERA.

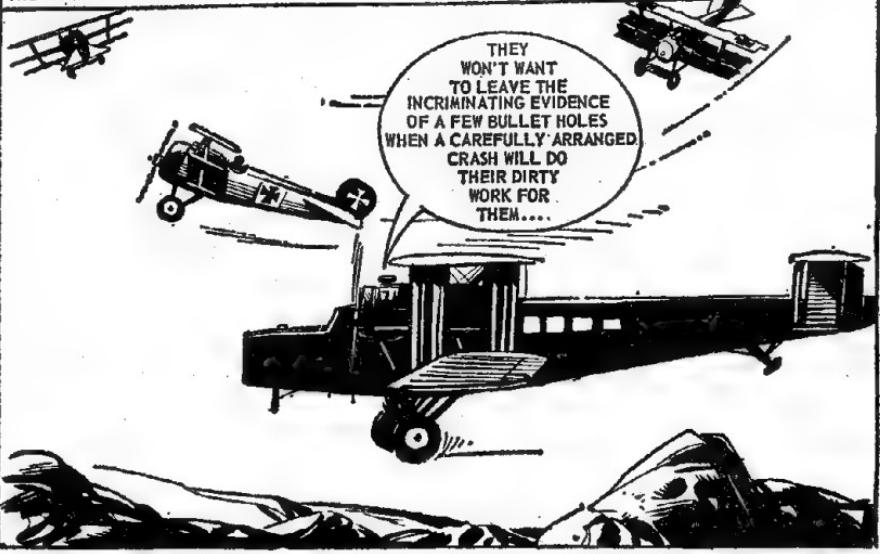
I DON'T
KNOW WHO THEY
ARE OR WHAT THEIR GAME
IS, BUT THEY'RE GETTING
SO CLOSE, I CAN COUNT
THE HAIRS IN
THAT PILOT'S
MOUSTACHE!

THE ROYAL PASSENGER HAD NOT
PANICKED, BUT A FEW WORDS WITH HIS
HARASSED PILOT DID NOTHING TO
ALLAY HIS ANXIETY.

IT SEEMS
MY ENEMIES
DO NOT MEAN ME
TO RETURN TO
MONGRAVIA. IT IS
ONLY SURPRISING
THEY HAVE NOT
SHOT US DOWN
ALREADY.

THE SWINE
ARE FORCING
ME TO FLY LOWER
AND LOWER, YOUR
MAJESTY. IF ONLY
WE'D STILL GOT
THAT FORWARD
MACHINE GUN
FITTED...

THE PILOT STARED DOWN GRIMLY AT THE STARK LANDSCAPE NOT SO FAR BELOW THEM.



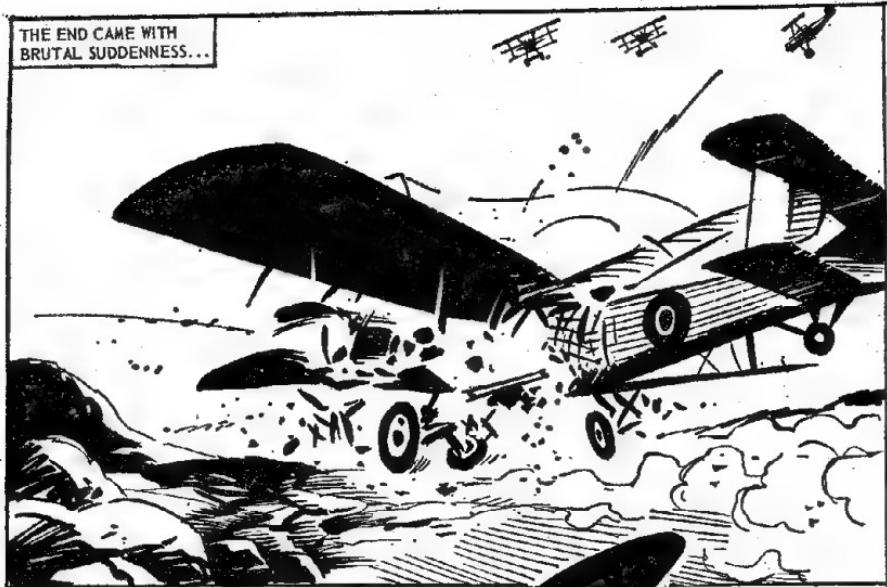
THEY
WON'T WANT
TO LEAVE THE
INCRIMINATING EVIDENCE
OF A FEW BULLET HOLES
WHEN A CAREFULLY ARRANGED
CRASH WILL DO
THEIR DIRTY
WORK FOR
THEM....

THEY WERE 150 MILES OFF COURSE... AND THE EFFORTS OF
THE FIGHTERS WERE BECOMING MURDEROUSLY OBVIOUS...



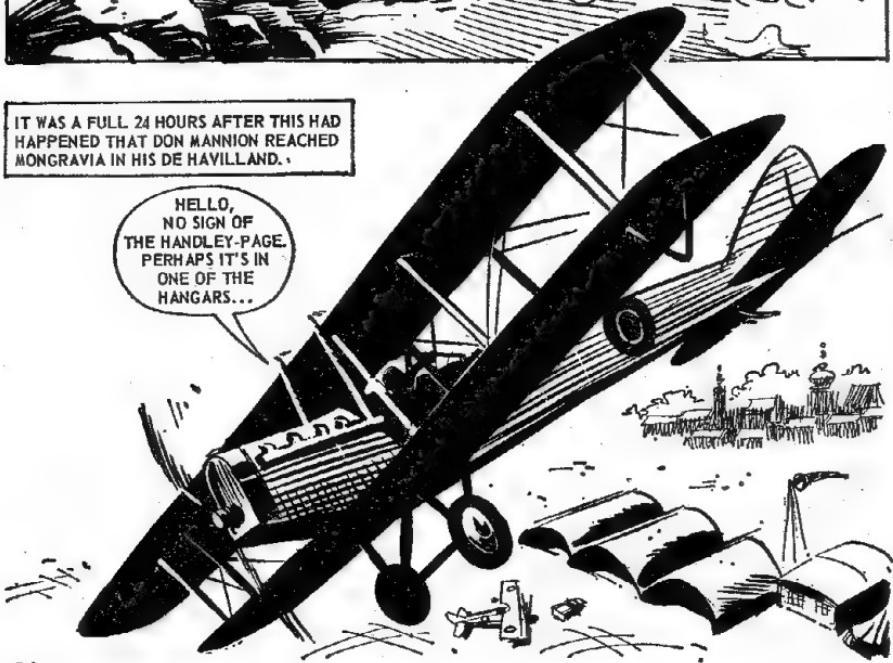
IT'S
NO GOOD!
WE'RE GOING
DOWN

THE END CAME WITH
BRUTAL SUDDENNESS...



IT WAS A FULL 24 HOURS AFTER THIS HAD
HAPPENED THAT DON MANNION REACHED
MONGRAVIA IN HIS DE HAVILLAND.

HELLO,
NO SIGN OF
THE HANDLEY-PAGE.
PERHAPS IT'S IN
ONE OF THE
HANGARS...



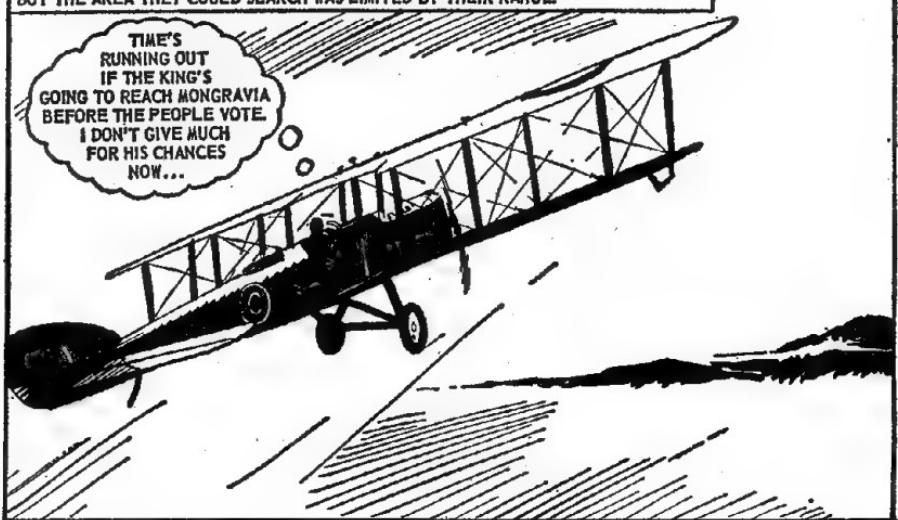
IT DID NOT TAKE LONG FOR DON TO LEARN TO HIS HORROR THAT THE KING'S AIRCRAFT HAD FAILED TO ARRIVE.



THE BRITISH PILOT WAITED IMPATIENTLY, BUT HOUR FOLLOWED HOUR, AND THERE WAS NO NEWS...



THE FEW OTHER AIRCRAFT IN THE COUNTRY WERE ALREADY INVOLVED IN THE HUNT, BUT THE AREA THEY COULD SEARCH WAS LIMITED BY THEIR RANGE.



IN RAGRAT, THE CAPITAL, THE KING'S RIVAL FOR POWER IN MONGRAVIA, WAS OF THE SAME OPINION AS DON...

ONLY
TWELVE HOURS
TO GO, MY PRESIDENT ...
AND I HEAR THE KING'S
PARTY ARE SEEKING A
POSTPONEMENT OF
THE REFERENDUM.

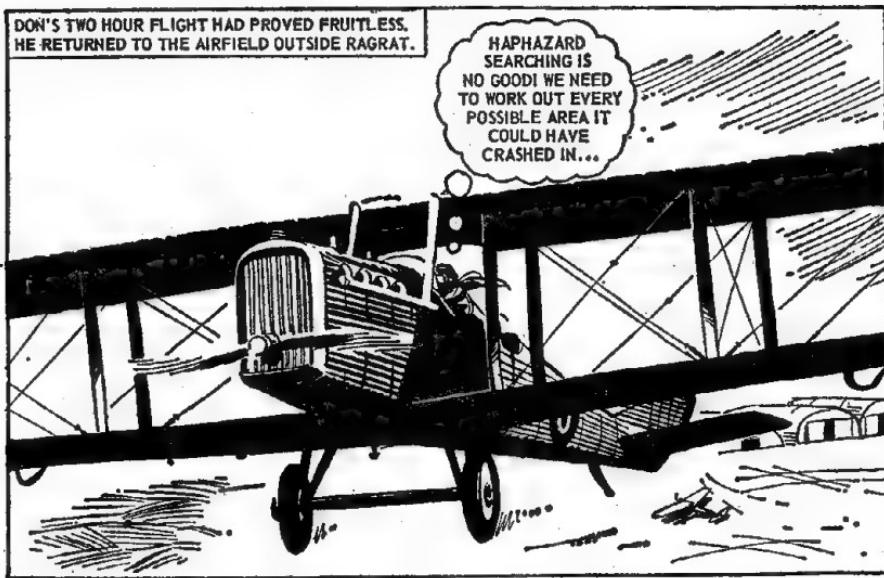
POSTPONEMENT!
I'LL HAVE NONE OF IT!
THE PEOPLE MUST VOTE AS
IT HAS BEEN ARRANGED.
AND TOMORROW...

PRESIDENT ALGARDO GAVE A HARSH LAUGH...

... TOMORROW, MONGRAVIA
SHALL BE MINE! AND MY FIRST
PLEASANT DUTY WILL BE TO
ARRANGE A STATE FUNERAL
FOR OUR MUCH LAMENTED
KING. NOT THAT THE BODY
IS LIKELY TO BE FOUND VERY
EASILY, EH, KARLON?

MOST REGRETTABLE,
MY PRESIDENT ...

REMIND ME ALSO. MY DEAR KARLON,
TO PROMOTE OUR GOOD FRIEND, MAJOR
HELMSTADT. MONGRAVIA'S - AH - AIR
FORCE IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE A
LEADER OF SUCH DECISION
AND TACT...



WITH THE AID OF LARGE-SCALE MAPS,
DON STUDIED THE WILD AND BARREN
COUNTRYSIDE OF MONGRAVIA...

NORTH OF THE OBVIOUS ROUTE ARE
THE ALPS. NO PILOT IN HIS SENSES WOULD
GO TOO NEAR THEM. AND SOUTH THERE'S
THE DESERT.



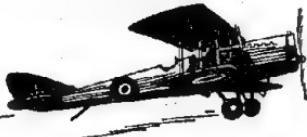
BUT PILOTS OF
MONGRAVIA'S
AIR FORCE WERE
PATROLLING THAT AREA.
THEY REPORTED
NO SIGN OF
THE KING'S
AIRCRAFT.

IT'S EASY
ENOUGH TO MISS
A SIGHTING... EVEN
FOR EXPERIENCED PILOTS.
FOR MY MONEY, THAT'S
THE AREA TO
SEARCH!



DON SET OFF BY HIMSELF ON A COURSE THAT WOULD
TAKE HIM TO THE HEART OF THE DESERT TWO
HUNDRED MILES FROM RAGRAT.

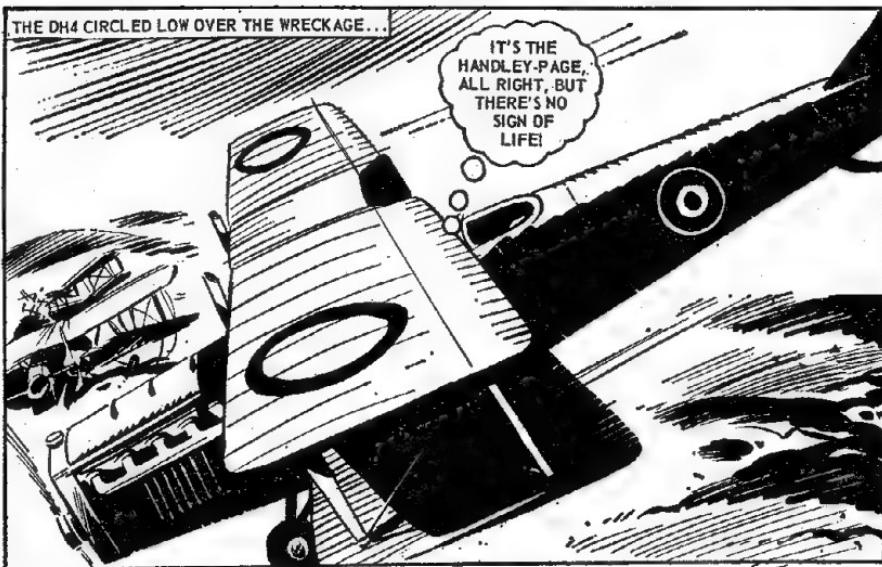
THE ENGLISHMEN
ARE SOMETIMES LIKENED
TO BULLDOGS BECAUSE OF
THEIR STUBBORN DETERMINATION.
MISTER MANNION IS INDEED
ONE OF THESE...



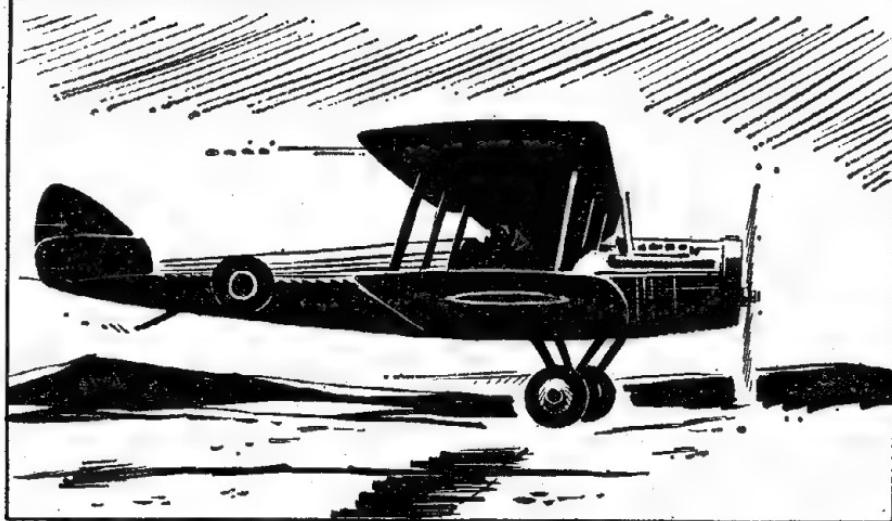
IT NEEDED ALL THE YOUNG PILOT'S DOGGED RESOLUTION, HOWEVER, TO SUSTAIN THE SEARCH OVER THE MONOTONOUS AND SEEMINGLY LIMITLESS DESERT.

I DAREN'T
GO ANY FARTHER.
AS IT IS, I SHAN'T
HAVE ENOUGH FUEL
TO GET ME
BACK TO
RAGRAT...

HE WAS BANKING THE DE HAVILLAND RELUCTANTLY AWAY... WHEN SUDDENLY...



DESPITE THE RAPIDLY FAILING LIGHT, DON FOUND A RELATIVELY FLAT STRETCH OF GROUND A FEW HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE WRECK...



HE HURRIED AS FAST AS HIS TIRED LEGS WOULD TAKE HIM TO THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF WOOD AND FABRIC...



AND THEN...



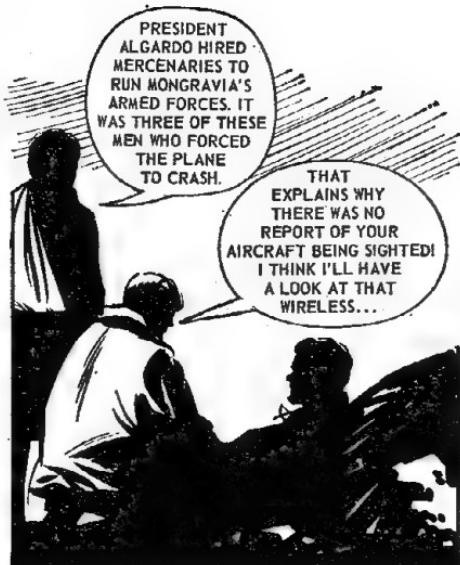
SAMMY WAS ALIVE, BUT SERIOUSLY INJURED. BUT EVERY MAN ON THE PLANE HAD BEEN KILLED... EXCEPT FOR ONE VERY IMPORTANT PASSENGER...

THE KING'S INSIDE THERE, PRETTY DEAD-BEAT. HE'S GOT A BROKEN ARM AND SOME CRACKED RIBS, BUT HE'S DONE HIS BEST FOR ME, I MUST SAY.



THE SOUND OF VOICES HAD ROUSED THE KING FROM HIS EXHAUSTED SLEEP ...

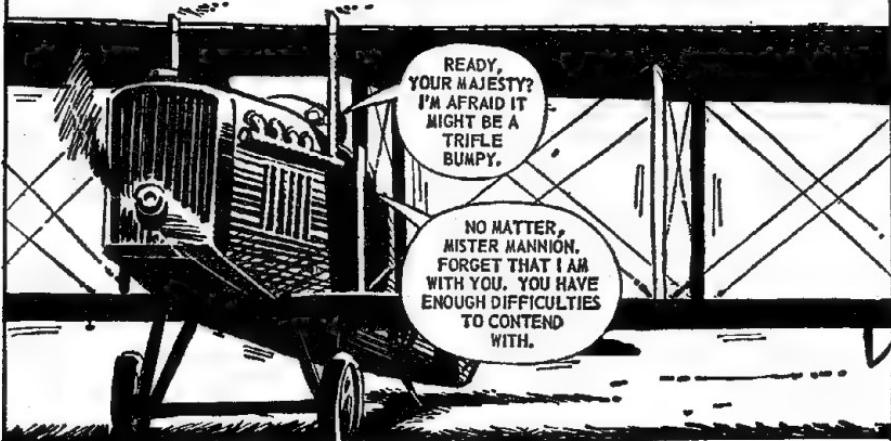




THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE DON MANNION COULD ATTEMPT...
AND THAT WAS TO FLY THE KING TO RAGRAT HIMSELF!



BEFORE HE COULD TAKE OFF, DON HAD TO SYPHON PETROL FROM THE RUPTURED TANKS OF THE
HANDLEY-PAGE AND REFUEL HIS OWN PLANE. AT LAST ...



NOT FOR ONE MOMENT DID THE STURDY LIBERTY MOTOR OF THE DH4 FALTER,
BUT IT WAS THE MOST NERVE-WRACKING TAKE-OFF OF DON'S EXPERIENCE...

PHEW!
THAT WAS
CLOSE!



HE TURNED ON TO A COMPASS BEARING FOR RAGRAT AND
SETTLED DOWN TO FIGHT HIS BODY'S NEED FOR SLEEP.

FIFTEEN
OUT OF THE
LAST TWENTY-FOUR
HOURS IN THE AIR...
AND I'M REALLY
BEGINNING TO
FEEL IT!



ON THROUGH THE DARKNESS AND INTO THE FALSE LIGHT OF EARLY DAWN, AND THEN SUDDEN SHOCK CHASED THE SLEEP AWAY...

GOOD GRIEF!

ONLY THE HAIR-TRIGGER REFLExES OF A TRAINED PILOT SAVED THE DH4 THEN...

TWO...NO,
THREE OF THE SWINE! AND THEY MEAN BUSINESS!

HE DIVED LOW, TWISTING AND TURNING LIKE A SPARROW WITH THREE HAWKS ON ITS TAIL.

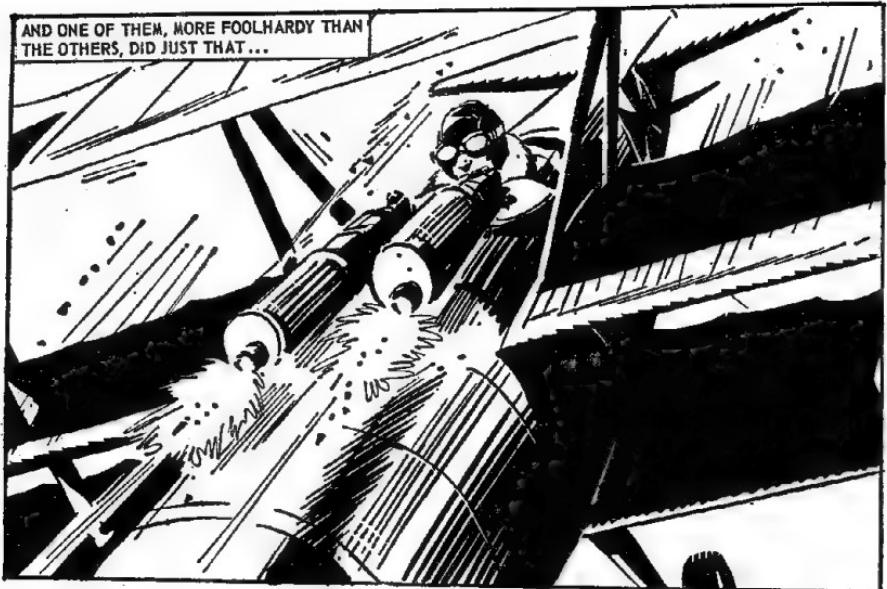


THE WINGS OF THE DH4 SCRAPED THE SIDE OF THE NARROW GORGE AND THE ROAR OF ITS ENGINE BATTERED BACK FROM THE ROCK ONLY FEET AWAY.

FOLLOW
ME HERE,
YOU BLIGHTERS...
IF YOU
DARE!



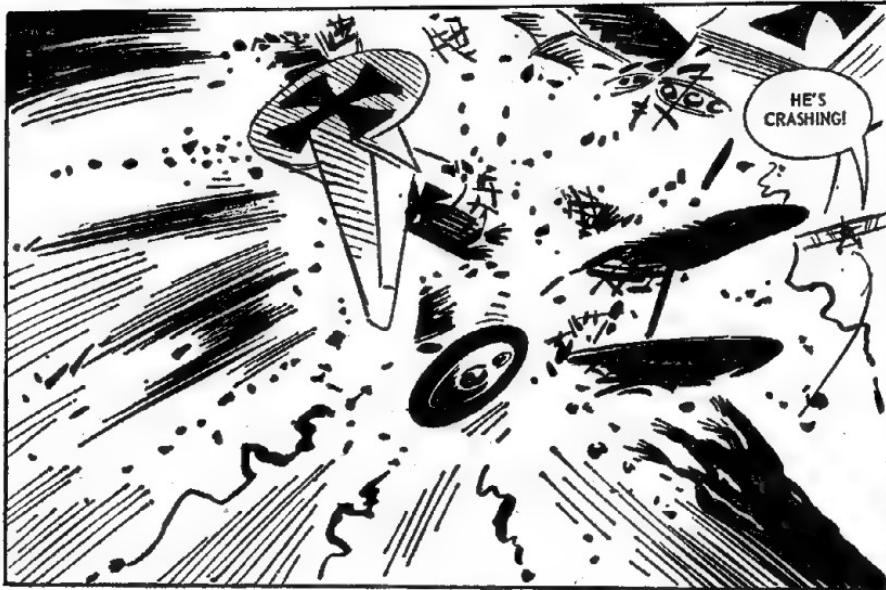
AND ONE OF THEM, MORE FOOLHARDY THAN
THE OTHERS, DID JUST THAT...



DON FEINTED AS IF TO BANK TO THE LEFT. THE ENEMY PILOT,
HELMSTADT HIMSELF, INSTINCTIVELY STARTED TO DO THE SAME...

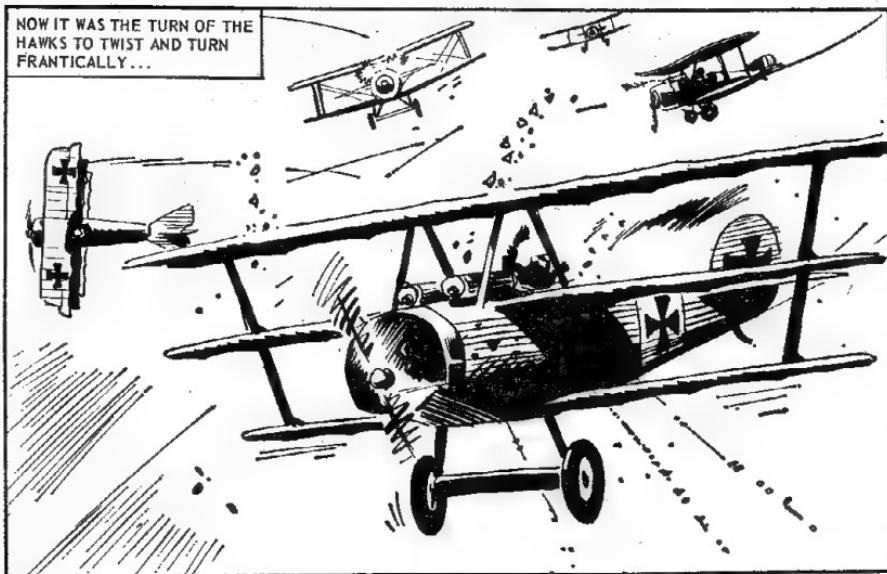
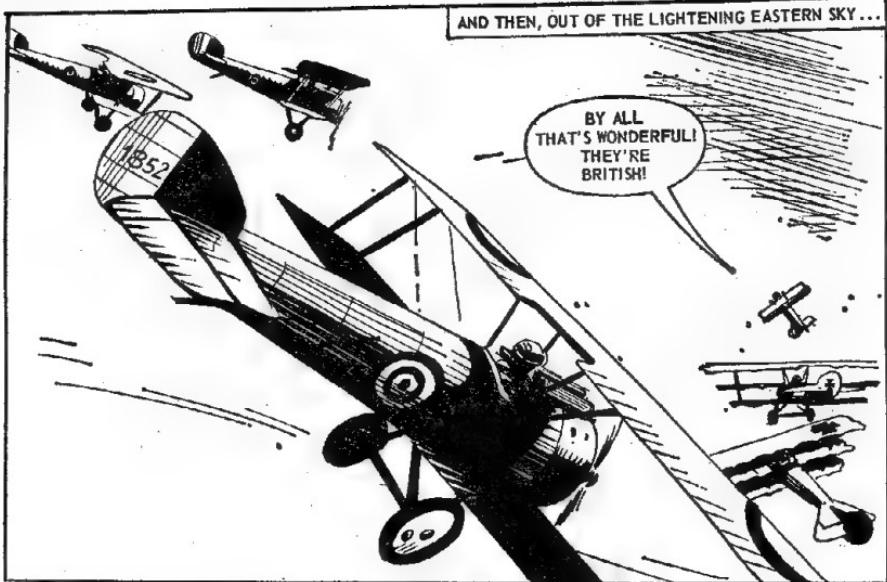
DONNERWETTER!

THE GERMAN REALISED, TOO LATE,
THAT HE HAD BEEN TRICKED.

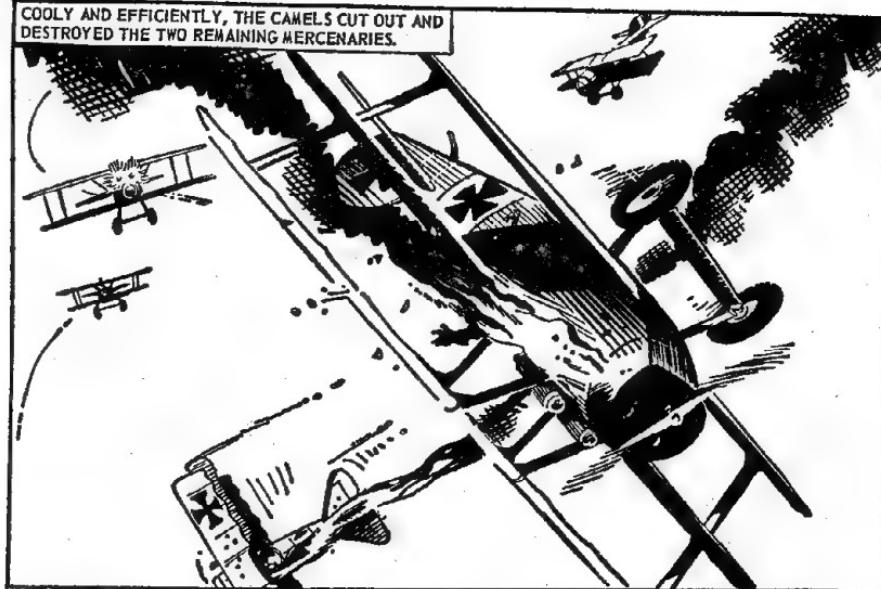


THE VALLEY WAS RUNNING OUT. THE DE HAVILLAND WOULD HAVE TO FACE THE VENGEFUL FURY OF THE TWO REMAINING ENEMY.





COOLY AND EFFICIENTLY, THE CAMELS CUT OUT AND DESTROYED THE TWO REMAINING MERCENARIES.



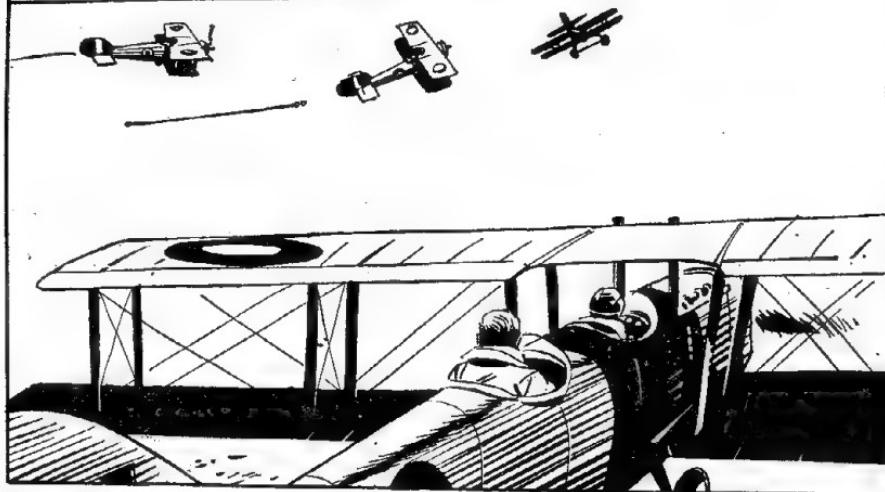
THE DH4 WAS BACK ON COURSE... AND WITH AN ESCORT FIT FOR A KING ...



THE SUN WAS RISING WHEN THE AERODROME AT RAGRAT CAME INTO SIGHT ...

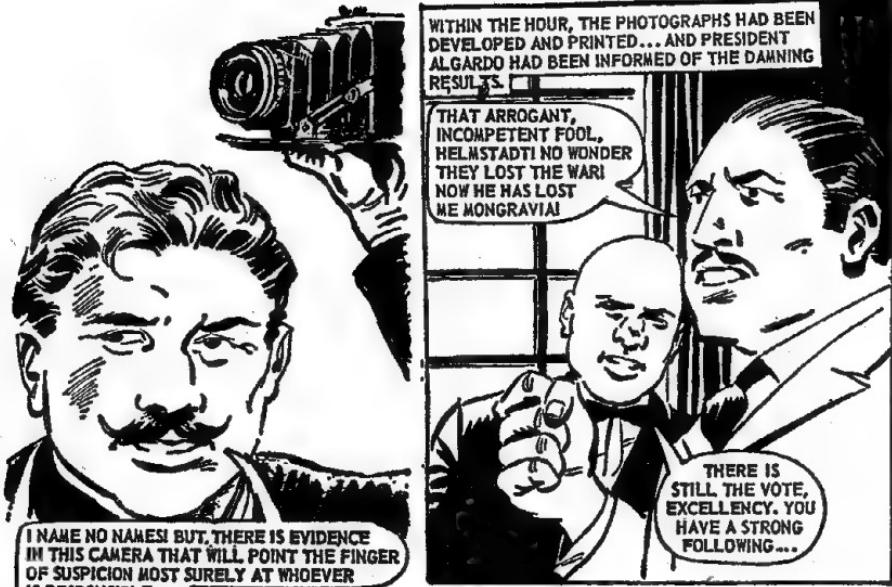


THE DE HAVILLAND ROLLED TO A HALT. AS WILLING HANDS WENT TO HELP
THE KING FROM THE COCKPIT, THE CAMELS DIPPED THEIR WINGS IN SALUTE...



AND THEN THERE WERE THE WELCOMING CHEERS,
THE EXPLANATIONS AND THE SPEECHES...





THE VOTING WAS STILL IN PROGRESS, ALTHOUGH THE RESULT WAS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION, WHEN DON MANNION SOUGHT AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING ...



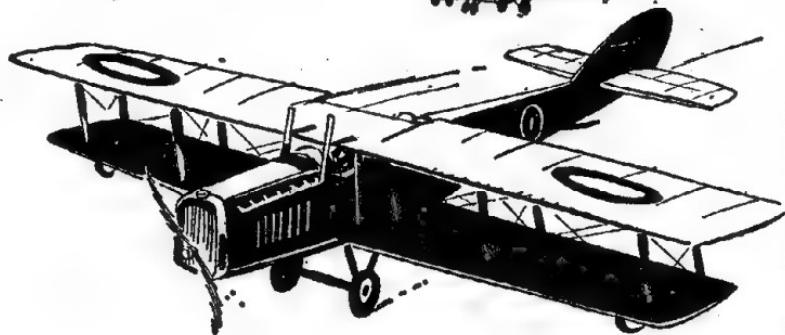
THE KING NODDED ...



YOUR FRIEND'S HISTORIC PICTURES,
WHICH DID SO MUCH TO SWAY THE VOTE
IN MY FAVOUR, SHALL GO WITH HIM... PLUS
MY PERSONAL MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE
TO YOUR EDITOR.



ALTHOUGH HE STILL HAD NOT RESTED, DON INSISTED ON
GUIDING THE "AMBULANCE" PLANE TO THE SCENE OF
THE CRASH.



SAMMY BARNETT LAY WHERE THEY HAD LEFT HIM, WEAKER BUT STILL CONSCIOUS..HE TRIED HARD TO
PULL HIMSELF UP AS HE RECOGNISED DON...



AS THE INJURED BUT PLUCKY LITTLE NEWSHOUND WAS
CARRIED TO THE "AMBULANCE" AIRCRAFT, DON EXPLAINED ...

... SO
YOU SEE,
THEY'LL REACH
BLIGHTY A FULL
DAY BEFORE I COULD
HAVE GOT THEM
THERE IN THE OLD
DH FOUR. WHAT'S MORE,
WE WERE THE ONLY
BRITISH PRESS PEOPLE
IN MONGRAVIA WHEN
IT BECAME A
KINGDOM AGAIN!

THE SCOOP
OF THE CENTURY,
EH? THAT'S GOING
TO TAKE SOME LIVING
UP TO, MANNION ...
BUT WE CAN DO
IT, EH?



THE GOLDEN RULE

THERE WERE TWO WHITE HUNTERS ON THE CLUB VERANDAH AS THE SAFARI COACH ARRIVED FROM NAIROBI.



A NATIVE BROUGHT ONE OF THE NEW ARRIVALS OVER TO THE HUNTERS...



SAMUEL J. BREKHOFF WAS A NEW YORK DIAMOND MERCHANT...A SUCCESSFUL ONE, OBVIOUSLY...



BEE-EAUTIFUL STONES! I'VE BEEN IN THE TRADE THIRTY YEARS, AND THE SPARKLE OF DIAMONDS CAN STILL GIVE ME A KICK, YOU KNOW THAT?

WELL, YOU'LL GET
A DIFFERENT SORT OF
KICK OUT HERE, MR.
BREKHOFF...
SHOOTING LIONS!

CAMP WAS SET UP OUT IN THE BUSH IN THE SHADE OF A HUGE BANYAN TREE. IT WAS STILL PRETTY HOT THERE ...

TWO GOLDEN RULES TO REMEMBER WITH THE BIG CATS, MR. BREKHOFF. DON'T FOLLOW A WOUNDED ONE INTO HIGH GRASS ... AND... LOOK OUT FOR THE SECOND LION... THEY HUNT IN PAIRS!

I'M A CAREFUL
MAN, RANKIN... I'LL
NOT FORGET!

FOR A MOMENT, THE HUNTER'S EYES WERE CAUGHT BY A DARK BELT PROTRUDING ABOVE THE LEVEL OF THE DIAMOND MERCHANT'S WAISTBAND.

A MONEY-BELT!
WHY'S BREKHOFF
WEARING THAT?

LATER, LEE RANKIN WAS PASSING HIS
CLIENT'S TENT WHEN A GLITTER OF
LIGHT CAUGHT HIS EYE ...



THE TENT FLAP WAS OPEN A FRACTION.
RANKIN EASED CLOSE, TREADING LIGHTLY...



THE LIGHT FLICKERED AND DANCED,
REFLECTED FROM A THOUSANDS FACETS
OF THE STONES.



RANKIN BACKED AWAY, HIS FACE A STONY MASK,
BUT HIS EYES ALIVE WITH EVIL THOUGHTS...



LEE RANKIN DID NOT SLEEP MUCH THAT NIGHT... BUT IT DID NOT SHOW WHEN HE AND SAMUEL J. BREKHOFF SET OFF WITH THEIR GUNS NEXT MORNING.



RANKIN KNEW HIS BUSINESS. HE GOT HIS CLIENT WITHIN SHOOTING DISTANCE OF THEIR QUARRY...



THAT'S PRETTY GOOD
SHOOTING, MR. BREKHOFF.
YOU'VE GOT A
STEADY HAND.



DIAMONDS! FOR A LITTLE WHILE RANKIN HAD
FORGOTTEN... BUT NOW THE MEMORY OF
THE GEMS HE HAD SEEN CAME BACK TO HIM.

WHY SHOULD
ONE MAN HAVE
SO MUCH? IT'S
NOT FAIR...



BUT BREKHOFF DID NOT ALLOW HIM TO BROOD ON THE SUBJECT. THE AMERICAN WANTED HIS MONEY'S WORTH.

ALLOW FOR THE WIND
...AIM FOR THE
RIGHT EAR...



THE RIFLE CRACKED AND THE LION SLUMPED TO THE GROUND. BREKHOFF STARTED FORWARD.

SUDDENLY, RANKIN SAW THE FALLEN LION'S TAIL TWITCH. A CRY OF WARNING ROSE TO HIS LIPS...AND WAS NEVER UTTERED...



HE WATCHED...UNMOVING...AS THE AMERICAN APPROACHED THE LION. AND THEN...

MY GRIEF
...AAAAGH!
HELP!

STILL RANKIN DID NOT MOVE A MUSCLE AS
THE ENRAGED BEAST SAVAGED HIS CLIENT.
AT LAST IT WAS OVER...AND RANKIN
TOOK AIM ...

YOU'VE
HAD YOUR
FUN, SIMBA
...SORRY...

THE LION DROPPED DEAD
...AND RANKIN BENT
OVER THE BODY OF THE
MAN HE HAD AS GOOD
AS MURDERED...

I WARNED
YOU ABOUT A
WOUNDED CAT,
YANK ...

THE DIAMONDS SPARKLED IN THE HARSH SUNLIGHT... JUST AS THEY HAD IN THE LAMPLIGHT THE NIGHT BEFORE...

SELL 'EM ANYWHERE, HE SAID. CAN'T BE TRACED... NEVER LOSE THEIR VALUE...



AND THEN HE HEARD A SOUND... AND TURNED...

NO... AAAAGH!



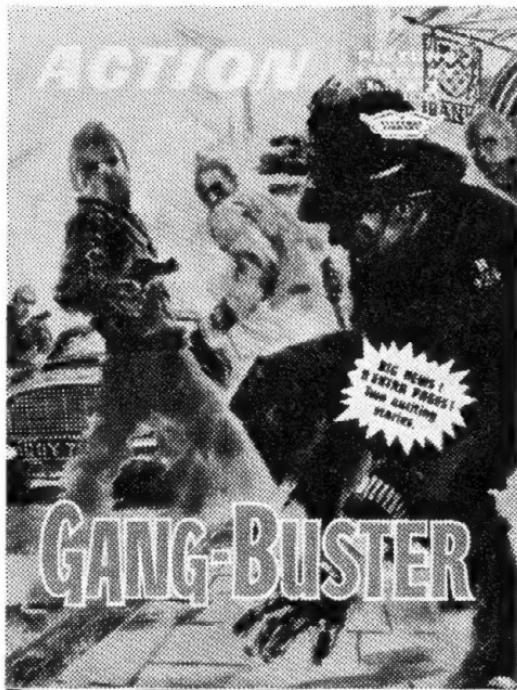
IN HIS EXCITEMENT AND GREED, LEE RANKIN HAD FORGOTTEN HIS OWN GOLDEN RULE OF BIG GAME HUNTING... LIONS HUNT IN PAIRS!

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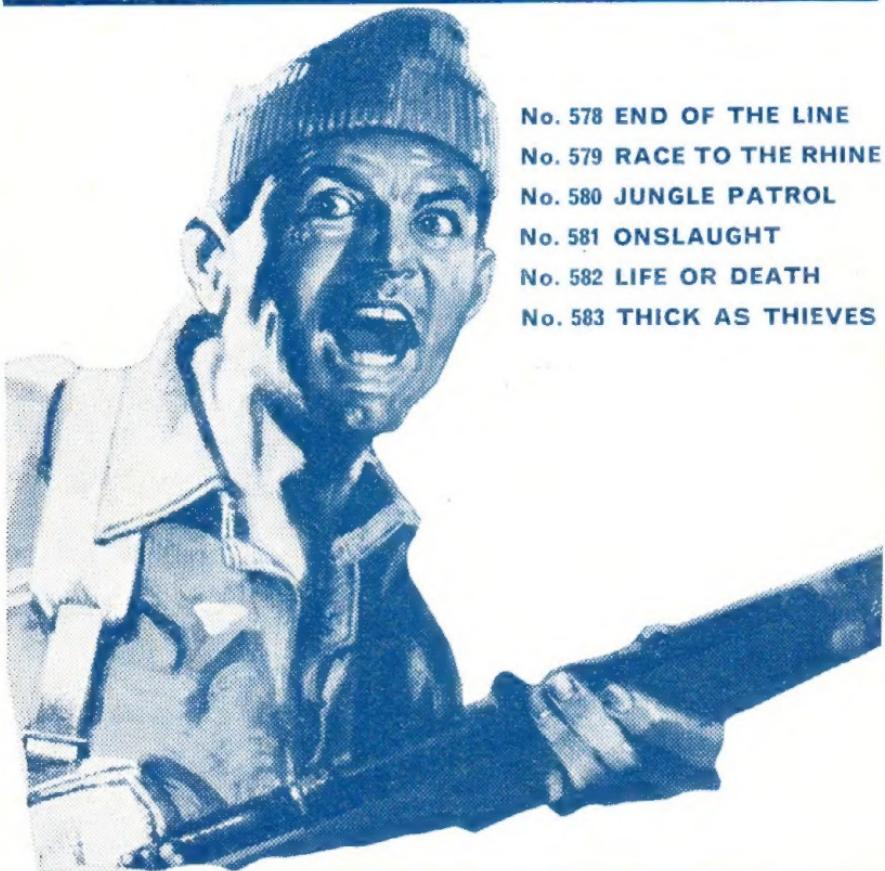
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